National Geographic Society's

Sustainable Seas expeditions

in partnership with
NOAA's National Marine Sanctuaries
and made possible by the
Richard & Rhoda Goldman Fund

"Few people seem aware that there's another North America underwater, one that's as large as the part that's above water, and that the sea is the foundation of life on earth. It's my personal dream that we do whatever we can in our lifetime to protect the wild ocean."

Dr. Sylvia Earle, Project Director
Sustainable Seas Expeditions

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Sustainable Seas Expeditions

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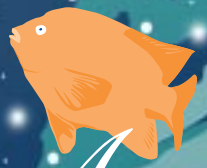
Sustainable Seas expeditions



A Project of Exploration & Public Education

Sustainable Seas

expeditions

In April 1998 the National Geographic Society, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Richard & Rhoda Goldman Fund announced an unprecedented mission for the oceans. With a $5 million grant from the Goldman Fund, the Society launched the *Sustainable Seas Expeditions*, a five-year project of deep-water exploration and public education in NOAA's National Marine Sanctuaries.

NOAA's 12 marine sanctuaries conserve, protect, and enhance the biodiversity, ecological integrity, and cultural legacy of the nation's marine environment. Ranging from American Samoa to New England, they include Pacific and Atlantic haunts of whales, sea lions, sharks, rays, and turtles; significant coral reefs and kelp forest habitats; and the remains of the *Monitor* Civil War shipwreck off North Carolina.

Dr. Sylvia Earle, National Geographic Society Explorer-in-Residence, will lead the expeditions to the 12 marine sanctuaries, using the newly designed *DeepWorker*, a one-person submersible capable of exploring to depths of 2,000 feet.

This innovative submersible technology will enable the expedition to:

1. undertake the first sustained exploration of the sanctuary system to depths of 2,000 feet,
2. photodocument the natural history of each sanctuary's plants and animals, and
3. establish the first permanent marine monitoring network in the marine sanctuaries.

Ultimately, through opportunities for ground-breaking exploration, compelling images and video, and public involvement, *Sustainable Seas Expeditions* is designed to generate greater public support for marine sanctuaries and, in turn, increased conservation of our oceans.

Beginning in April 1999, *Sustainable Seas Expeditions* will employ the innovative *DeepWorker* submersibles. These small, maneuverable submersibles provide the gift of time to explore at depths unattainable using conventional means, even within normal diving range. With their spacecraft-like nature, these manned submersibles also will attract broad public interest in what "aquanauts" observe. Like astronauts reporting their direct view of Earth from space, *DeepWorker* aquanauts will be able to capture a sense of the ocean from within.

The deep sea is as uncharted as the vast interior was when President Thomas Jefferson commissioned Lewis and Clark to explore and document the then unknown resources of the American West. *Sustainable Seas Expeditions* has the potential to produce significant scientific discoveries and extraordinary educational experiences for millions of vicarious participants, and the data gathered will provide stronger foundations for marine research and conservation policies.

"Whatever else is achieved, however, the ultimate success will be in the project's overall impact on dispelling ignorance about the sea," said Project Director Sylvia Earle. "With knowing comes caring, and with caring there is hope that an ocean ethic will arise that will secure a sustainable future for ourselves and for the seas."

The success of the *Sustainable Seas Expeditions* will depend on the participation of many collaborators. To date, collaborators include the U.S. Navy, NASA, Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, Mote Marine Laboratory, Center for Marine Conservation, SeaWeb, and the Jason Foundation—and the list continues to grow.